

system, was left to the people of the country and came to naught.

If I may say so, this difference in the recognition of the importance of general education still exists to some extent. It is not uncommon even now to hear of a certain gentleman's foreign against the invasion of private rights in taking one class to educate another class, but happily, as I think, this point of view is becoming rarer and rarer. It is customary to charge the backwardness in this respect to the poverty of the South, but it seems to me much more chargeable to the indifference of our people to the importance of education.

Our people need educating first as to the supreme importance of education, and until they are aroused to this fact we can never even start to catch up.

"How does Virginia compare with Massachusetts in regard to illiteracy among the white population? The tables of illiteracy in the last census show that the illiterate white men of voting age, born of American parents in the North Atlantic States, running from Maine down to Pennsylvania, constitute only 21 per cent. of that class, while in the South Atlantic States, running from Delaware down to Florida, they constitute 12.2 per cent. In Virginia they constitute 12.5 per cent., as against 9.6 per cent. in Massachusetts, and 1.5 per cent. of the native-born white children in that State, born of foreign parents. Indeed, it is a curious and striking fact that there are more illiterates in this country who are the children of the native-born whites, than there are illiterates who are the children of foreign-born whites. This means that the foreign-born population in this country recognizes the imperative importance of education far more than our native population. One cause, of course, is that a considerable percentage of the foreign-born settle in towns where they have the benefit of good school systems, but yet another cause is that they settle in the North, and where they have better facilities for education than in the South. This brings me to my point that one of the important factors in the future is the building up of the South by bringing in a first-rate class of people from outside the South. If we are ever to have a good class of emigrants among us, whether from the North or foreign countries, we must improve our public school system. Sensible, right-thinking men will not in these days go with their families where they cannot educate their children.

Conditions in the State.

Are you familiar with the conditions prevailing in Southern country districts?" Mr. Page was asked.

"I know the country districts of Virginia fairly well," he replied. "and the State is full of young men who are kept down for want of ordinary elementary education. I know well that there is no one great panacea, but the thing which approximates it most nearly is a good, practical, elementary education for the whole people. I believe in the opportunity for such an education to every soul in the country, black as well as white, and I am convinced that the future will justify this judgment."

In fact, though it does not seem to me to be necessary, I believe in making education compulsory, for this section can never catch up with other sections until knowledge is diffused and our people are awakened to the necessity of obtaining it.

"Compulsory education already exists in many of the States, and unless I am mistaken, Virginia herself, as advanced as she may think the step now, will one day awaken to the fact that her vital interest lies in giving such an education to every child within her borders. The details of this may well be left to those who shall take the matter up and press it forward when that day comes."

"The first thing to do is to get into the minds of our people what we are losing by our failure to keep up with the North in this vital matter. The South is not now as poor, at least, as she used to be. One of the chief troubles is that the rest of the country has been brought up to the realization of the prime importance of education, and consequently the whole of the North is dotted over with excellent schools of one kind or another, founded by private donors, while our people who have not been educated to this idea contribute to this important purpose."

"At a recent banquet in New York before a Southern association, embracing many men of wealth, I had the pleasure of saying that while we of the South were proud to see the success they have achieved in commercial fields, outstripping on their own ground the thirty Northerners, we had yet to learn of their giving any great sums for education in their native States; and that as we understood they now beat the Yankees in acquiring money, we would at least be pleased to see them emulate the Northerners in giving away some of it."

The Kind Needed.

"What kind of education do you think the South most needs?"

"It is important, of course, that the sort of education, which we give should be that which is best adapted to the needs of our people. We have seen an attempt in our generation to educate a class of our population, the negro, in a way which was not adapted to their needs, with the result that as soon as they got a little book-learning many of them thought themselves too fine to do manual labor, and were anxious to become preachers or politicians."

"What the South needs is a system which embraces industrial education. In fact, one crying need now is for the better system of education of our teachers, and then a system which shall offer them a field for the proper exercise of their powers."

"The time has passed when ignorance is an asset in any State. States now are prosperous, and powerful, almost in exact

proportion to the enlightenment of their population, and unless we build up our system of general education and bring it abreast of the times, we shall not only not catch up with other sections of this country, but we shall continue to fall steadily to the rear."

"I believe that there are parts of Virginia in which the average country boy can go to a public school the average length of the session, five or six months, and be able to read a page of printed matter, but what are we to expect when our teachers are paid only from \$17.50 to \$25 a month?"

"One significant fact is that the negro appears to be more interested than the whites in securing such an education as is offered him, with the result that the young negroes are learning to read and write, while the young whites are being kept by their parents from going to school. This is why I say that we ought to have compulsory education."

"Not only throughout New England, but the West, where I went last year, I found a system of public schools so far in advance of the public school system in Virginia, and, I believe, in the rest of the South, that it seemed like another country."

Effect of Bad Roads.

"Do you consider that our bad roads have anything to do with the lack of education in the country?"

"I would say emphatically that one important, practical matter, is to improve our roads so that the children may be able to get to the schools, which often they are prevented doing now by our backwardness in that matter. It is not a wholly pleasant task to speak in such critical terms of our conditions here, but it seems to me of the utmost importance that our people should awaken to the gravity of the situation. Happily, they seem to be arousing to it, and I believe that the next few years is going to see a yet greater awakening. Indeed, the illiteracy in the South in the last twenty years has been tremendously reduced, and if our people set themselves earnestly and persistently to work, we shall reduce it yet further, which means an advance all along the line. A good part of this reduction, happily, was in the South. Compulsory education in the North, however, accounted also for a large part of the decrease."

"According to the United States census, the percentage of illiteracy in the native born population ten years of age and over was reduced from 27.7 in 1850 to 15.9 in 1880 and to 12.2 in 1900."

"Have you any one in mind who has worked for education in the South along the lines you suggest?"

"I consider that among the most valuable men who have lived in this country since the war was Dr. J. L. M. Curry, who devoted all the last part of his life to awaken the South for her need for education. He is followed by a large number of earnest and devoted men in Virginia, as well as in other States in the South, to whom his life was an inspiration."

How to Awaken Interest.

"What practical means could you suggest to awaken our people?"

"For one thing, I would say make the candidates for office in our State, from the governorship down, realize the real situation of our people to have an improved system of education, and to pledge themselves to use all their power to its accomplishment. Of the several gentlemen, whose names are spoken of in connection with the nomination for the highest office in the State next year, I would have the people declare for that one who would most earnestly set himself to the reconstruction and uplifting of our educational system, or at least to the earnest carrying out of its essential features."

"I am not in politics. There is no office that I want, or, as far as I know, would have, but I am ready to do my part in a political campaign, as a voter in Hanover county, and an advocate of this matter, for I esteem it the most essential thing for our people to-day, and I mean to arouse our people to its importance. It possibly may satisfy you that I am not in politics, when I tell you that if I had the power I would raise the tax in Virginia to give the people of Virginia a better school system. I have been told that no man need hope for preferment who takes this position."

"There was a man, though some did count him mad, The more he spoke away, the more he had, and this is essentially true of giving money for the purpose of education."

Government May Help.

"Do you think there is any chance of the government of the United States contributing towards public school education?"

"I think it not probable within the immediate future, but it seems to me that these lines failed years ago for what seemed good reasons. Two years ago the Hon. Charles A. Gardner, regent of the University of the State of New York, made an address at Albany upon the educational conditions in the South, in which he set forth our needs in the matter of education and the reasons why we were not able to carry the burden that had been imposed upon us by the war, and powerfully advocated the government returning to the South, in the form of contributions to her public education, some of the losses which she had sustained."

"This address was taken up and complimented extensively, so much so that the Brooklyn Eagle, a strong Democratic paper, spoke of it as 'an epoch maker.'"

"Are you pessimistic about the South as far as education is concerned?"

"It may have appeared so, but I am not. In fact, I believe that the South has the golden age still before her. I believe, moreover, that the South is the stronghold of true Democracy, and that one of the proudest of her great future is that her people are awakening to the imperative importance of using every means to secure enlightenment, though we have been unhappily cut off from the rest of the country by our conditions, if I may say so. I think that we have been given too much when we have been given mental valetudinarianism."

"I am hopeful that national conditions are going to improve rapidly, although the recent election showed that the South did not generally participate with the rest of the country in its political views."

Roosevelt and the South.

"What do you think about the President's present attitude towards the South?"

"I believe that the President wishes to be friendly to the South, and I think we should meet him. Those who know the President, know that he never intended any injury to the South, however, he may have offended her by a few acts, but these were certainly very far-reaching in their consequences. His intentions have always been most friendly, and he was clearly taken aback by the fiery hostilities which those acts aroused among us."

"I stated at the University of Virginia after the President had visited that seat of learning that, he said, if the South could wait for two years before passing upon him, he believed that she would be satisfied as to his good intentions."

"His first act the night of his election, when in the moment of triumph, he declared that he would not again accept a nomination, was worthy of the best man who ever sat in the presidential chair. However, he may be assailed. Mr. Roosevelt is by blood half southern and

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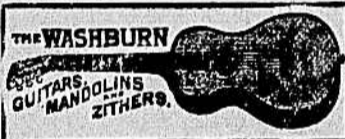
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SHOPPERS ARE OUT IN FULL FORCE

(Continued from First Page.)

holiday rush. Every department is stocked to its utmost capacity, but when next Saturday comes around, doubtless the goods will be well picked over, and few articles of choice will be left.

The goods shown in the stores this year are indeed one of the most attractive displays to be seen, and these are well within reach of the most modest purchaser, and among them can be found the leading goods of the day.

A merchant stated yesterday that the book department in his store had grown more than any other branch of his business. He attributed this to the fact that the publishers had gotten their articles down to a low figure, and that the demand for books had been brought about in that way.

They performed their fire drill precisely as they had been trained. Then the teachers and older boys composing the fire brigade, attacked the blaze and quickly extinguished it.

It was confined to a laundry and the damage was slight.

Fun Just Beginning.

The campaign did not end for the Republican office-seekers in North Carolina with the November election. The little printing they engaged in then was only intended to lumber them up for the real race, which is now on—Federal jobs being the goal.—Raleigh (N. C.) Post.

HEADACHES FROM COLDS. LAXATIVE BROMO QUININE removes the cause. To get the genuine, call for the full name and look for the signature of E. W. Grove, Jr., adv.

articles which sell at a reasonable figure, that are quite sufficient for such presents that are generally given. Of course one has no trouble in finding handsome articles if he desires them.

The jewellers are doing a nice holiday business, and, indeed, the shops present a brilliant appearance and are most attractive. The novelties in silverware are particularly pleasing this year.

Products Are High.

Persons doing Christmas marketing will experience a little more difficulty in making their purchases than the regular shopper, and this is caused by the extremely high prices now prevailing in the local retail markets due to the approaching holiday season, and the long continued spell of cold weather.

While the markets were well supplied yesterday the produce had suffered considerably on account of the cold, and many of the vegetables were frozen stiff. Prices are stiff, too, and things are not over abundant.

Locally, winter and running water appeared on the stands yesterday. It, of course, the supply will not be in before next week. There will be no lack of Christmas decorations for the overgreens are plentiful this season.

Vegetables on the market were rather indifferent, many of them being frozen. A dealer yesterday quoted the following prices on the retail market for vegetables: Celery, four stalks for 25 cents; turnips, 10 cents per half peck; black-eyed peas, 10 cents per quart; lettuce, three heads for 25 cents; apples, 15 cents per half peck; cyprials, four for 25 cents; sweet potatoes, 20 cents per half peck; Irish potatoes, 35 cents per peck; cabbage, 5 and 10 cents per head; carrots, 5 cents per bunch; turnip salad, 15 cents one-half bunch; turnip salad, 15 cents one-half peck; celery, 10 cents per bunch; beets, 5 cents per bunch; hubbards, 15 to 25 cents per peck; onions, 2 to 8 cents per quart; parsnips, 5 cents per bunch; cau-

liflower, 15 to 25 cents per head, and egg plants, 10 cents per head.

Eggs were selling at 35 cents per dozen yesterday, and it is said that they will probably reach 40 cents next week. Rabbits are quoted on the retail market from 18 to 25 cents apiece.

Fowls are selling high, and the much sought-after turkey will bring even high prices next week. Turkeys are selling at 20, 25 and 35 cents a pound, and the dealers state that by next Friday they will reach 35.

A CHRISTMAS RECITAL.

Fair Girl Students Get Only One Day Holiday.

(Special to The Times-Dispatch.) BUENA VISTA, VA., Dec. 17.—The recital given in the auditorium of the Southern Seminary Monday, under the auspices of Mrs. P. H. Brown, director in music, Miss Carter, in elocution, and Miss Abernathy, in voice, was an unusually brilliant occasion. The stage was artistically decorated with evergreens and potted plants.

The beautiful lyric soprano, Miss Lulu Tate, of Greensboro, N. C., delighted all present. Miss Hilda Nelson, of Eastern Virginia, also showed marked talent. The piano duet by Misses Berta Garth, of Albemarle county, and Margaret Sweetwood, of Allegheny county, was very impressive.

Miss Louise Merrittweather rendered "At the Spinning Wheel," by Schuler, with an artistic grace rarely found south of an artist. The well drilled chorus of Miss Abner, was followed by a scene from "Evangelion," and "Galatia" (Gibb), by Misses Griffith, of Maryland, and Abney, of Texas. This was one of the most striking numbers of the programme.

The Seminary has found out from an experience of nearly forty years the demoralizing effect of an extended Xmas vacation upon school life and school

work, and so this year it gives only one day holiday for Xmas. As usual the health of the student body has been well-nigh perfect with the climate and water of the Blue Ridge mountains and the fine personnel of the Southern Seminary, particularly noticeable last night as the young ladies filed to the assembly room to the strains of sweet music, in the beautiful bloom of health and youth.

Can Save Basilica.

(By Associated Press.) ROME, December 17.—Architect Manfredi, author of the report on the condition of the basilica of St. Mark's, Venice, is now in Rome, and has written to the Italian, saying that the measures proposed in the report are sufficient to prevent the damage becoming worse, and that urgent and indispensable work has been going on with great activity and care since last June.

Four Fateful Words.

What four words can strike terror to the stoutest heart? was the question asked the Post yesterday by a lady over the telephone. We gave it up. "The pipes are frozen," came the answer, and we hung up the receiver.—Baltimore Post.

Maybe Not.

The Richmond Times-Dispatch intimates that there may be two Andrew Carnegies—one who endorses notes and one who doesn't—but somehow we can't imagine the Jekyll and Hyde business in connection with Andrew—Montgomery Advertiser.

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